

LGA Pay Offer: Members' Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Section 1: UNISON's view of the pay offer and the consultation

1. What is UNISON's view of the LGA's pay offer?

The UNISON NJC Committee recommends that members **REJECT** this 2016/18 pay offer. The Committee believes that the offer falls far short of what our members deserve and what the employers can afford. However, the Committee is clear that the offer is the best achievable by negotiation to date and that nothing short of a concerted campaign of political/and industrial action up to and including all out strike action will have the potential to improve the offer.

2. What is the LGA's pay offer?

Your branch will be able to provide you with a briefing which details the LGA's offer in full or you can download a copy here:

[Membership briefing](#)

[Outer London briefing](#)

[Inner London briefing](#)

3. What am I being consulted upon?

UNISON's consultation on the LGA's pay offer will ask you whether you accept the LGA's pay offer - "yes" or "no". If you answer "no" you will be asked to indicate whether you are prepared to take one or more of the following options:

- **All out strike action** – all members taking strike action at the same time
- **Selective strike action** – tactical groups of workers in key services taking strike action at specific times e.g. cleaners, refuse & cleansing, car park attendants, coroners
- **Action short of strike** - a refusal to perform full normal duties and 'working to rule' i.e. working exactly to contractual conditions and ceasing to perform non-contractual tasks that rely solely on goodwill such as overtime, flexible working, cover for vacancies, withdrawal of own vehicle for business use etc.

4. How am I being consulted?

Your branch will be consulting you by any of the following methods:

- Balloting members by postal votes or by email
- Consulting members through workplace meetings
- Consulting using electronic voting
- Consulting through a combination of workplace meetings, balloting members and electronic voting.

5. What are the views of the other unions?

Unite are consulting their members on the basis that the pay offer should be rejected. The GMB is adopting a neutral position in their membership consultation.

6. When will the results of the members' consultation be announced?

The UNISON NJC Committee will consider the outcome of the consultation and decide its course of action based on all the responses to the consultation at its meeting on 23 February. Your branch will be notified of the outcome within 24 hours. *(NB the 24 hour criteria is for pay negotiations but we will get a bulletin out)*

Section 2: How is my pay negotiated?

7. How is my pay negotiated?

As a worker in local government, most schools and some other public bodies, your pay and other conditions are determined by a negotiating body called the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services. The NJC Trade Union Side is made up of representatives from UNISON and other trade unions. The Local Government Association (LGA) represents local authorities in negotiations. Many organisations in the public and private sectors also follow the NJC's agreements.

8. Are you covered by the LGA's pay offer?

Everyone on NJC (Green Book) pay and conditions working in councils, schools, academies and other bodies such as Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs,) Fire and Emergency Planning Authorities and National Parks will be covered by the offer.

9. My terms and conditions have been changed since the last pay award. Am I still covered by the NJC (Green Book)?

Many councils are changing terms and conditions locally but unless your council has formally pulled out of the National Joint Council you will remain on NJC pay. This means that you will be covered by the pay offer and are able to vote in the member consultation on the pay offer. If you are unsure whether your council is still part of the NJC, you should check with your branch.

Section 3: The LGA's pay offer

10. What happened during negotiations for pay for 2016 – 17?

In June 2015, the NJC Trade Union Side submitted the following one-year pay claim for 2016/17:

- Deletion of NJC and all local pay points which fall below the level of the UK Living Wage (and deletion of GLPC pay points below London Living Wage) and a flat rate increase of £1 per hour on all other pay points;
- Retention and protection of NJC Green Book, Part 2 terms and conditions
- Fair treatment for school support staff through a joint review of term time working.

During the negotiations, the Trade Union Side put forward fall-back proposals similar to the recent Scottish local government two-year pay settlement. We called for deletion of SCPs below the UK Living Wage of £8.25 (£9.40 in London) and for those on SCPs above – 1.5% in year 1 and 1% in year 2. The LGA took these proposals away but refused to move from their final offer, claiming that they were unable to move from a 1% increase in each year for those above SCP 18.

The NJC trade unions expressed their disappointment at the LGA's refusal to consider our claim or further proposal but believe the pay offer is the best achievable by negotiation and have agreed to consult our members on it.

11. The LGA have refused to meet our claim for future protection of NJC Part 2 Conditions, but why do they need protecting?

The Green Book has certain key provisions such as sick pay, annual leave and maternity rights which are meant to set a basic standard across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are contained in a section of the Green Book called Part 2 and are not for local negotiation. However, some authorities are still looking at reducing them locally, contrary to the Green Book. In our claim and during negotiations we sought a guarantee that Part 2 terms and conditions will be retained and protected. It is a key way in which employers can demonstrate that they value and support you - their dedicated and skilled workforce. The LGA have refused.

12. The LGA have agreed to a joint review of term-time working. What could I expect to see from a review of term-time conditions?

The school team is a range of professional, technical, managerial and site staff. UNISON believes that treating teachers as full-year and reducing the salaries of support staff by up to 20% through term time working is divisive, bad for morale and unfair. These contracts penalise a predominantly female workforce and compound the problems of low pay within it.

UNISON wants all school support staff to be on 52-week year contracts. Where support staff are on term-time contracts, there are many variations and inconsistencies in the formulas used for reducing pay from the full year rate to a term time figure. There is also no clarity on holiday entitlement. We are therefore calling for a joint review of term time working and an NJC approach to deliver fair, consistent and transparent contracts for school support staff. UNISON is stepping up our campaign for fair treatment for term-time workers.

13. What are NJC spinal column points (scps)? Are they the same as grades?

The basic pay of each employee consists of a pay point or points on the NJC pay spine. The bottom of the NJC spine starts at scp 6 and the top is scp 49. At present scp 6 is £13,614 a year and scp 49 is £42,957. Grades are not agreed by the NJC. Each authority (or school) uses the NJC pay spine to construct their local grading structure. Some employers start their bottom grade on a scp above scp 6 and many extend the NJC pay spine locally above scp 49.

The pay increase would be applied to the NJC pay spine. UNISON bulletins will refer to NJC pay points or scp because employers have different grading structures. You should check with your branch how the NJC pay spine applies to your pay and grading structure.

14. I am paid on London GLPC pay spine. Does the LGA's pay offer apply to me?

Yes. London has separate Inner and Outer pay scales, which consolidate London Weighting into basic pay on each scp. The pay offer percentage increases on each NJC scp are applied to the Inner and Outer London scp. Both London pay spines start at scp 6 and the top is scp 70.

15. Increments

Will I still get an increment in 2016 and 2017?

Yes, if you are entitled to increments then they will be paid as normal and not affected by this pay offer.

16. Living Wage supplements

My employer pays me a Living Wage supplement. What happens to me?

The percentage increases in the offer will apply to your basic pay. If your employer pays you a supplement to make up your basic pay to the Living Wage, they are likely to reduce the supplement to keep your total pay at the Living Wage level, **though they don't have to do this.**

17. What if I'm within the scope of the NJC but paid higher than SCP49?

Under NJC (Green Book) conditions you would still be entitled to the 1% increase in April 2016 and the further 1% increase in 2017.

18. Part-time workers - What about part time workers?

The percentage increases will be applied fully to your basic pay.

19. Multiple job holders - I have more than one job. What about me?

The percentage increases will be applied in full to your pay for each job.

20. Leavers, people retiring, new starters and temporary contracts

What about leavers, people retiring and new starters?

Anyone who leaves before 1 April 2016 will not get anything. A leaver after 1 April 2016 and before 1 April 2017 will only get 1% on 1 April 2016.

I'm on official leave, what happens?

If you are on maternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave or sick leave the percentage increases will apply to your basic pay. They are not paid to anyone on an unpaid career break.

I am on a temporary contract. How does the pay offer affect me?

Subject to any other exclusion, the payments should be paid to all employees whose pay is set in accordance with the NJC for Local Government Services pay arrangements regardless of whether they are on permanent or temporary contracts.

21. Sickness absence - I am on long-term sickness absence. Will I be receiving any increase?

Yes. You should receive your percentage increase.

22. Acting-up? Will I be paid according to my acting up rate?

The percentage increase will be applied to your acting up basic pay scale point on 1 April 2016.